

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2924

PRETORIA ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK
SUBJ: RHODESIA: ZANU-ZAPU UNIFICATION

1. SUMMARY: MUGABE PUBLICLY CLAIMED THAT PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE TOWARDS THE UNIFICATION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT AFTER ZANU-ZAPU MEETINGS IN LUSAKA AUGUST 19-20. GENERAL CONGRESS IS TO BE HELD SOON AND PF WILL MERGE ITS TWO WINGS AND ELECT A SINGLE LEADER. PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN WORKING ON A SINGLE PARTY CONSTITUTION AND ON A SCHEME TO TRAIN ZAPU AND ZANU CADRE TOGETHER. MUGABE SAID HE WOULD NOT BE BITTER IF HE WERE NOT CHOSEN AS THE SOLE LEADER OF PF AND HINTED THAT NKOMO MIGHT BE IF HE WERE NOT ELECTED. MUGABE SAID HE HAD MET WITH OBASANJO ON AUGUST 18 AND DENIED THAT FORMER NIGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER GARBA HAD PARTICIPATED IN UNITY TALKS. MUGABE WELCOMED ALL PARTIES MEETING. NKOMO, SPEAKING IN PRIVATE, CONFIDENTIAL

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SAID LITTLE PROGRESS WAS MADE TOWARDS PF UNITY AND EXPRESSED DISGUST WITH ZANU IN GENERAL AND MUGABE IN PARTICULAR. TIMES OF ZAMBIA EDITORIAL SAW PF MEETING AS ONE MORE EFFORT, PROBABLY FRUITLESS, TO BRING ABOUT PF UNITY. END SUMMARY.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: SPEAKING TO THE PRESS AUGUST 20 AT LUSAKA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR MAPUTO BY

NIGERIAN MILITARY PLANE, MUGABE GAVE HIS VIEWS OF WHAT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN ZANU-ZAPU TALKS AUGUST 19-20. HE SAID THE PF WILL MEET SOON TO MERGE ITS TWO WINGS AND CHOOSE A SINGLE LEADER. PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE ON A PF CONSTITUTION, AND A SCHEME HAD BEEN WORKED OUT FOR THE JOINT TRAINING OF ZANU AND ZAPU MILITARY. MUGABE URGED HASTE IN UNIFYING THE PF POLITICALLY AND MILITARILY. THE QUESTION OF LEADERSHIP OF A UNIFIED PF SHOULD BE DECIDED BY THE PEOPLE. IF HE, MUGABE, WERE NOT CHOSEN THE SOLE LEADER, HE WOULD NOT BE BITTER. IN A REMARK PROBABLY AIMED AT NKOMO, HE THEN ADDED "I HOPE NOBODY ELSE WOULD BE BITTER."

3. MUGABE SAID PF WAS READY TO ATTEND AN ALL PARTIES MEETING AND WAS EAGER TO HEAR FROM THE BRITISH WHEN AND WHERE THE CONFERENCE WOULD TAKE PLACE. HE SCOFFED AT STATEMENTS MADE BY THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT THAT THEY WOULD NOT GO TO A CONFERENCE IF IT WAS AIMED AT HANDING OVER POWER TO THE PF. MUGABE SAID THE PF IS FOR THE COMPLETE OVERTHROW OF THE SMITH REGIME AND ITS REPLACEMENT BY THE FORCES OF THE PF. MUGABE INVITED MUZOREWA, SITHOLE AND CHIRAU TO JOIN THE PF.

4. MUGABE SAID THAT HE HAD MET WITH OBASANJO WHILE IN LAGOS AND HAD BRIEFED HIM ON THE MILITARY NEEDS OF THE PF. HE DENIED THAT FORMER NIGERIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS GARBA, WHO RETURNED WITH HIM FROM LAGOS, HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE PF UNITY MEETINGS IN LUSAKA. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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5. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL: VINCENT MIJONI, EDITOR OF THE DAILY MAIL AND AN OLD FRIEND OF NKOMO, TOLD CHARGE EVENING AUGUST 20 THAT NKOMO WAS PERTURBED BY MUGABE'S PRESS CONFERENCE. MIJONI, WHO HAD SPENT AN HOUR WITH NKOMO THE AFTERNOON OF THE 20TH, SAID THAT NKOMO HAD TOLD HIM IT HAD BEEN AGREED THERE SHOULD BE NO PUBLICITY GIVEN TO MUGABE'S TRIP TO NIGERIA. MUGABE HAD WILLFULLY VIOLATED THAT AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO SHOW THAT HE "WAS A BIG MAN WHO COULD GET NIGERIA TO PUT A SPECIAL PLANE AT HIS DISPOSAL." FURTHER, UNITY TALKS HAD NOT GONE WELL. THIS WAS DUE TO THE DISUNITY THAT PERMEATES ZANU. MIJONI SAID THAT NKOMO, IN A BITTER MOOD, LASHED OUT AT ZANU AS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYING THE LIBERATION OF RHODESIA. "IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR ZANU, WE SHOULD HAVE LONG SINCE BEEN IN SALISBURY." NKOMO TOLD MIJONI THAT A COMMON APPROACH TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING HAD BEEN THE MAIN CONCERN OF THE PRINCIPALS AT THE MEETING.

6. TIMES OF ZAMBIA EDITORIAL OF AUGUST 21 CAPTURES SOME OF NKOMO'S MOOD. EDITORIAL WELCOMES UNITY TALKS, BUT IS SCEPTICAL THAT THEY WILL LEAD ANYWHERE. "SUCH A MERGER IS MANY YEARS OVERDUE. WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT SO MANY TIMES

THAT WE WILL NOT BELIEVE IT UNTIL IT HAPPENS."

7. COMMENT: WE SUSPECT THAT NKOMO'S ASSESSMENT OF THE
LUSAKA UNITY TALKS IS CLOSER TO REALITY THAN THAT OF MUGABE.
IT LOOKS LIKE MUGABE'S STATEMENTS WERE DESIGNED TO PUT THE
BLAME ON ZAPU, IF NO REAL MOVEMENT TOWARDS UNITY TAKES PLACE.
WE ARE INTRIGUED BY THE NIGERIAN ROLE IN GETTING ZANU AND
ZAPU TOGETHER FOR UNITY TALKS. END COMMENT.
CLINGERMAN

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